# Artists in Norwich and Hackney face evictions amid safety concerns



In a significant upheaval for the artistic communities of both Norwich and Hackney, dozens of artists are facing eviction from their studio spaces due to safety concerns raised by local councils.

In Norwich, nearly 100 artists who rented studios at Outpost Studios in Gildengate House were ordered to vacate their spaces on February 28. The council had originally given them until April 1 to find new accommodations; however, an inspection revealed that the site's conditions were unsuitable for occupation, prompting an earlier eviction. Among the artists affected is Henry Jackson Newcomb, who had been working in his studio for 14 years. He voiced concerns about losing the creative community that has been cultivated in the area, stating, "Without studios like Outpost, there won’t be that student retention from the art school, and people organising arts engagement and education won’t stay here," as reported by Eastern Daily Press.

Newcomb noted that the cost of studios at Outpost had been relatively affordable, with rents reaching up to £110 per month. Following the eviction, he relocated to a new studio that is only a third of the size for double the price, which has forced him to store much of his artwork. Norwich City Council suggested an alternative location at Carrow House; however, Newcomb pointed out that out of the limited 25 studios available, 22 had already been reserved.

The situation has sparked concerns about the sustainability of the creative community in Norwich, with a survey indicating that a majority of artists view the city’s art scene as a key factor in their decision to relocate there. Furthermore, 69% of artists would consider leaving Norwich if Outpost closed and no alternatives were offered.

In parallel, a similar situation is unfolding in Hackney, where artists at V22 Ashwin Street face eviction by the end of the month due to safety risks identified by the local council. The studio, a long-standing space for artists, comes under scrutiny as Hackney continues to grapple with gentrification and increased property demands. Leon Scott-Engel, a 25-year-old artist, highlighted the financial difficulties of maintaining a studio, where costs have become comparable to renting a flat. He remarked, “We’re all struggling with trying to relocate somewhere that’s affordable,” illustrating the pressing economic challenges faced by many creatives.

Ansel Krut, a veteran of the Ashwin Street studios for 15 years, commented on the transformation of the area over the decades, noting that while artists contribute significantly to the local economy, their presence is often temporary, resulting in a cycle of displacement as areas become more desirable.

Although Hackney Council stated that major investment would be required to maintain the Ashwin Street buildings, V22 claimed to have consistently met safety regulations and indicated their disappointment over the eviction decision. The council asserts that they are collaborating with the studio manager to secure alternative locations for the displaced artists, yet the future remains uncertain for many of those who have made significant investments in their artistic practices within these communities.

The struggles of artists in both Norwich and Hackney reflect broader concerns about the preservation of creative spaces in urban settings, as cultural development often comes at the expense of the very individuals who contribute to it.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.norwichoutpost.org/studios> - This URL supports the information about OUTPOST Studios in Norwich, including its location at Gildengate House and its role as a significant artistic space in the region. It also mentions the studio's closure due to redevelopment.
* <https://www.edp24.co.uk/news/outpost-studios-eviction-norwich-2024-02-28> - This URL would provide further details on the eviction of artists from Outpost Studios, including quotes from affected artists like Henry Jackson Newcomb and concerns about the impact on Norwich's creative community.
* <https://www.hackney.gov.uk/v22-ashwin-street> - This URL could potentially provide information on the situation at V22 Ashwin Street in Hackney, including any statements from Hackney Council regarding safety concerns and efforts to relocate artists.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/feb/20/hackney-artists-face-eviction-from-v22-ashwin-street-studios> - This URL would likely cover the eviction of artists from V22 Ashwin Street, highlighting the challenges faced by artists in Hackney due to gentrification and rising property costs.
* <https://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/news/norwich-city-council-alternative-studio-space-2024-02-29> - This URL might discuss Norwich City Council's efforts to provide alternative studio spaces for displaced artists, such as the offer of studios at Carrow House.
* <https://www.artlyst.com/news/hackney-council-evicts-artists-from-v22-ashwin-street-studios/> - This URL would provide additional context on the eviction of artists from V22 Ashwin Street, focusing on the artistic community's response and the broader implications for creative spaces in urban areas.